

# Burr Oak Woods

Conservation Nature Center Newsletter

The *Nutshell* ~ February 2010

## Bobcats in the Web

One fine morning at Burr Oak Woods, I was lucky enough to see a bobcat run across Park Rd. near the Bethany Falls trailhead. To my excitement and delight, its fur looked well-groomed and it probably weighed in at an average 20 pounds.

Quiet and elusive, the bobcat is mostly an unseen part of the web of life in Missouri. Bobcats were once restricted to the Ozarks and the southern area of the state. Many rural Missourians used to consider the bobcat a “shoot on sight” animal and that sentiment has decreased over the years. With added knowledge of the important role these predators play to keep rabbit and rodent numbers in check, bobcats have increased dramatically within the last 30 years. There are now between 12,000 and 18,000 bobcats in Missouri.

Bobcat sightings are also rare because their schedule conflicts with ours. They may sleep about 18 of every 24 hours and they’re awake when their prey is active. Since the bobcat’s diet is about 70 percent rabbit, you’re most likely to see a bobcat around sunrise

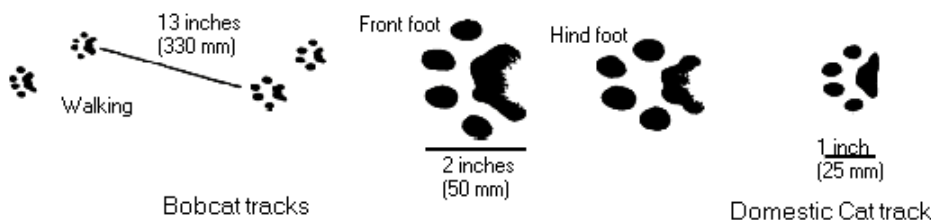
and sunset, but they also have amazing night vision (they see as well with only starlight as a human does with a full moon).



Prowling their territory, a bobcat’s curiosity leads them in a zig-zag pattern of 3-4 miles of ever changing trail. With so many smells, sounds, and sights to investigate, who can walk in a straight line? While they’re out and about, bobcats will freshen up scent markings, leave scratch marks on cedar and other small trees, and look for good shelter from bad weather. Leaving scent, scat (droppings) and scratch marks helps attract mates and deter competition. Wildlife researchers studying bobcat territories have found 31 scent posts and two scats in less than ¼ of a mile.

Even with its spotted fur giving it a superior camouflage, someday soon you too may be lucky enough to see a bobcat in its natural setting. Hopefully, these mammals will continue to be known as important predators who help keep the balance of nature.

*Lisa Richter*  
Naturalist



### Management Footnote:

The Missouri Department of Conservation maintains a close watch to determine whether and when a harvest can be taken safely. As predators and scavengers, bobcats play an important role in the wildlife community. Unless causing heavy damage to man’s interests, bobcats should be tolerated and regarded as part of a vanishing wilderness.

Hello everyone!

Just as a reminder about proposed changes in the hours of operation at Burr Oak Woods. These changes may affect your visits to the area. The final plan will be implemented on March 1. See the March Nutshell Newsletter for further updates.

Proposed Conservation Area hours:

Central Standard Time: 7:00a – 6:00p

Daylight Savings Time: 7:00a – 8:00p

The front gate will be reprogrammed to these hours. Outdoor bathrooms will be closed when the building is closed. Outdoor privies will remain open.

Proposed Nature Center hours:

Open to the public ~ Tuesday through Friday 7:00a – 6:00p

Saturday 8:00a – 5:00p

The Nature Center will be closed on Sunday and Monday.

We are absolutely committed to continue providing quality programs and services. I hope you will find our new extended hours convenient for your visit to Burr Oak Woods.

*See you on the trails!*  
Lisa LaCombe, Nature Center Manager



# February Programs

Please call 816-228-3766 on or after **Monday, February 1, 2010** to register for the free programs listed. It is important to arrive five minutes before the program time. If you have to cancel, please call as soon as possible, so someone on the waiting list can attend.

## 6 Saturday 1:00 – 2:00p Big Cats in Missouri Families

*with children 12 & up*  
Let's separate myth from fact about Missouri's big cats. Join a naturalist for a discussion about bobcats and mountain lions. Please call to register.



## 9 Tuesday 6:30 – 8:00p Conservation Kid's Club: Night's Special Secrets Ages 7 – 13

It is thrilling to explore the forest at night. It is like a special secret to investigate when others are asleep. Where do the animals go? Which ones are out prowling around? Bring your spirit of adventure and join us to discover the answer to these questions. Please call to register.

## 10 Wednesday 6:30 - 8:30p "Green Acres"

### Conservation Management on 3 to 30 Acres Adults 18 & up

So you've moved to the country to get away from it all. Now what? What can you do with your small parcel besides mow and mow and mow? Topics covered will include: *Attracting wildlife to your acreage. Tree and shrub planting for landscaping and wildlife value. Identification and control of common invasive species. Woodland management. Equipment available for loan.* Please call to register, deadline for registration is Friday, February 5.

## 13 Saturday 11:00 – Noon

### Love is in the Air

#### Families with children 7 & up

Would you like to give your valentine something unique and truly special for Valentine's Day? Come out and make your very own natural Valentine's Day card for that special someone. Please call to register.

## 14 Sunday 1:00 – 2:00p

### Together Forever

#### Families with children 7 & up

Did you know that penguins find their mate for life? Are there any wild animals that are life-mates here in Missouri? Join a naturalist to do a little fun-filled research on this day of love. Please call to register.

## 16 Tuesday 8:30 – 10:00a

### Bird Watchers

#### Adults 18 & up

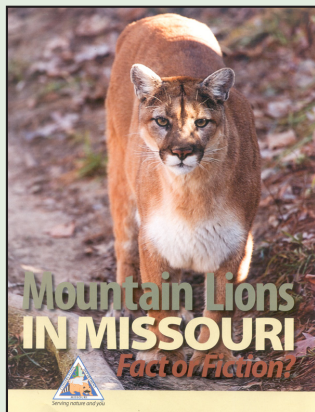
Marvel at the survival skills of winter birds as we go birding the trails or observe the feeders at the nature center. If the temperature is 20 degrees or warmer, dress for a hike. Colder temperatures invite us to the solarium to watch the feeders. Please call to register.

## 16 Tuesday 10:00 – 11:00a

### Babes in the Woods:

#### Pine Forest Walk Ages 0 – 36 months

Join a naturalist as we enter the strange quiet world in a pine forest. We will explore a special area here that few visitors have seen. Please call to register.



**FREE**  
at the nature center

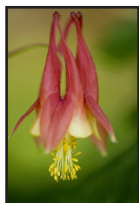
## Mountain Lions IN MISSOURI

Fact  
or  
Fiction?

leaflet

## 7 Sunday 1:00 – 2:00p Critters in Your Yard Families with children 5 & up

Do you have a developing naturalist in your family? Would you like to learn more about wildlife that live in or visit your own backyard? Your family will work with a naturalist to group and sort these wild critters, as real scientists do, so that we may better understand them. Please call to register.



**Saturday March 6, 2010**  
early registration begins February 19 at 8:00a

## NatureScaping Workshop



In hard economic times, we are all ears when someone is sharing a way to save us both money and time. Attending our Naturescaping Workshop is a sure way to learn how to conserve both. Learn specifics about native plantings that can enhance your property's value.

Please watch the March newsletter for details and registration information.

**17 Wednesday 10:00 – 11:00a**

### ***Little Acorns: Colors of Winter***

**Ages 3 – 5**

With snow on the ground and the trees without leaves, it is easy to spot our colorful, feathered friends. Come out to learn about the pretty birds that visit our feeders. Please call to register.

**17 Wednesday 10:00 – 11:30a**

### ***Home School: Only About Owls***

**Ages 6 – 8, 9 – 11, or 12 – 18**

Enter the mysterious world of owls. Join us as we actually meet a live owl and use nature's classroom to discover how their amazing life and adaptations have influenced our ecosystem. Tell us whoo, whoo, whoo knows about owls? Please call to register.

**21 Sunday 2:00 – 3:00p**

### ***Trapping Techniques***

**Ages 12 & up**

Join us as we discuss furbearers and several techniques and traps used to trap them. We will cover the proper use of foothold traps, body grip traps, and live traps. We will discuss the history of trapping and explain how useful it can be in managing wildlife populations. Please call to register.



**27 Saturday 1:00 – 4:00p**

### ***Antler Measuring***

**Adults 18 & up**

If you have always wanted to know more about how to score the racks on those nice bucks you've been harvesting in Missouri, this program is for you. Bring your own antlers and we'll teach you how to score them. Bragging rights are just a few steps away! Please call to register, space is limited.



**28 Sunday 1:00 – 2:30p**

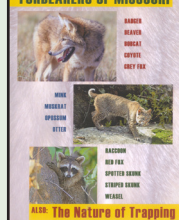
### ***Secret Lives of Raptors***

**Families with children 5 & up**

Raptors are an amazing group of birds with their sharp hooked beaks and their strong talons, but there is a lot more to a raptor than just being a good predator. They lead complex lives as they search for mates, raise young and patrol territories. Come out and join us as we discover their secrets! Please call to register.

## ***Furbearers of Missouri DVD***

#### **FURBEARERS OF MISSOURI**



Foxes, coyotes and raccoons are just a few of the 14 Missouri furbearers featured in this video. Learn how they live, the hazards they face and how we can conserve them. Bonus footage "Nature of Trapping." Available for purchase at the nature shop for \$10.00.

**27 Saturday 11:00 – Noon**

### ***Rockin' & Readin' Nature Tales***

**Ages 2 & up**

Join us for a story hour as we lead you on fantastic nature adventures! We will meet birds, mammals, and all sorts of magnificent creatures! We will cross rivers, discover mysteries within the forest, and fly across the prairies. Our imaginations are the only limits. No registration required.

# **MDC DISCOVER nature**

**MDC  
DISCOVER  
nature  
FAMILIES**

**Discover Nature  
Families programs are  
designed to help adults  
and children explore  
nature and master  
outdoor skills together.**

**20 Saturday 8:00 – 10:00a**

### ***Rodent Rap***

**Families with children 8 & up**

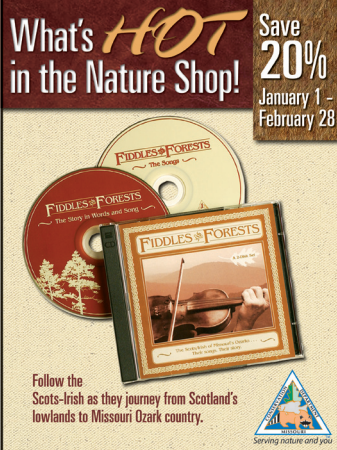
Rodents get a bad rap! Many see them only as nuisance animals. Join naturalist, Jason Watson to discover the important role they play in nature. We will live trap these critters and have a chance to get to know them up close and personal. Parents will help the children learn how to identify the animals we catch, and learn just where they fit into the food web. Please call to register.



***Join us as we feed the critters on exhibit at Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 3p. Each Sunday a nature film will be shown at 3:30p.***



## Nature Shop News



### FIDDLES AND FORESTS CD

Former Conservation Department educator and fiddle player, Mike Fraser, brings Missouri's Scots-Irish folk history to life with this spirited mix of Celtic jigs, foot-stomping Ozark bluegrass and narrative enhanced by nature sounds. Follow the Scots-Irish as they journey from Scotland's lowlands to the shores of America, and on to Missouri Ozark country. With more than 20 songs, the CD's highlights include folk minstrels Cathy Barton and Dave Para. The two-disc set features the story of songs on one disc and the music alone on the other.



## Lake City Shooting Range

28900 E Argo Road, Grain Valley, Mo 64029

**816-229-4448** ~ [www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/ranges/lakecity/](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/ranges/lakecity/)

**Hours of Operation Wednesday - Sunday Noon - 4:30p**

**5 Friday 6:00p - 8:00p 20 Saturday 9:00a - 11:00a**

**Introduction to Reloading Teens and .22's**

**Metallic Cartridges**

**7 Sunday 9:00a - 11:00a**

**Basic Handgun**

**21 Sunday 9:00a - 11:00a**

**Family Trap Shoot**

## Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area Youth Managed Turkey Hunt

### Date of Hunts:

Required pre-hunt Orientation Saturday, April 3 at Lake City  
Range and hunt location

Hunt Saturday, April 17th and Sunday, April 18th

*Dear Youth Turkey Hunters,*

*We regret to announce that the Youth Managed Turkey Hunts at Burr Oak Woods Conservation Area and James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area for April 2010 will be cancelled due to budgetary cuts and scheduling conflicts. We will continue to look at the possibility of a Youth Managed Hunt for 2011. Please refer to the Burr Oak Woods Newsletter for future updates.*



*Lisa LaCombe,  
Nature Center Manager*

